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Washington, D.C. 20505

25 April 1983

MEMORANDUM FOR: DDCI  
C/NESA  
FROM: DCI  
SUBJECT: NSPG Paper - 22 April 1983

Attached for your information and  
comment.



William J. Casey

Attachment:  
NSPG Paper - SYSTEM II 90503  
from William P. Clark

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RVW OADR

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NSC review completed.

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THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

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NATIONAL SECURITY PLANNING GROUP MEETING

DATE: Friday, April 22, 1983  
LOCATION: The Situation Room  
TIME: 11:00 a.m.

FROM: WILLIAM P. CLARK

I. PURPOSE

To review the objectives of our Middle East policy and to discuss George Shultz's proposed trip to the area.

II. BACKGROUND

The bombing of our embassy in Beirut is the latest in a series of setbacks we have faced in the Middle East in the past weeks. Hussein's refusal to come to the table has effectively stopped the peace process in its tracks. Meanwhile, the Soviet Union continues a major build-up of military forces and personnel in Syria in an obvious effort to reassert influence in the Middle East. In the absence of any bold initiatives by us, the probabilities for continuing deterioration of the situation increase as do the real risks of an Israeli-Syrian military engagement, which could involve Soviet military forces. Furthermore, six months of negotiations between Israel and Lebanon have reached an impasse and there is no immediate prospect of a breakthrough.

Beyond this gloomy outlook, we have to face the fact that as the leader of the Western world, our actions or non-actions in the Middle East are being watched very carefully by our friends and adversaries alike. To be blunt, our credibility as a great power is at stake. No less than three Arab leaders have told you this personally that respect for the U.S. hangs in the balance. How we handle ourselves in the coming weeks after these setbacks will be seen as an acid test of your Administration's effectiveness in pursuing U.S. global interests.

George's memorandum at Tab A focuses almost entirely on the Lebanon negotiations and discusses a trip strategy. He would like your authority to make the trip, although there is no reason to believe that he can satisfactorily

resolve the tough issues of Haddad and residual Israeli presence in southern Lebanon. He also wants you to approve certain offers to Israel in order to improve our leverage on progress in the withdrawal talks and to further strengthen the bilateral relationship. More specifically, he wants a confidential agreement or letter of assurance between ourselves and the Israelis which would basically give them the right to go back into Lebanon if their security was threatened. He wants approval to increase U.S. troops in Lebanon but not to send them to the south. In the broader context of U.S.-Israeli relationships, he wants to invite Begin and Arens to Washington and send the F-16s to Congress as soon as an agreement between Israel and Lebanon is reached (but not wait until Israeli troops are out).

I have very serious reservations about these proposals, which I have communicated to George. For instance, a secret agreement with Israel to re-enter Lebanon would have to be very carefully worded and would have to ensure that it was not a "green light" to go in, for instance, against the Syrians. Moreover, if the agreement was ever made public, our good offices as mediator between Israel and the moderate Arabs would be compromised. Also, the question of whether we should tell Lebanon about it is not discussed. I expect there will be considerable opposition to this proposal and on very good grounds. Regarding more U.S. forces for peacekeeping, we do face a more serious problem in Congress now, but I agree with George, we have to be able to increase the size of the U.S. force. I would go further and recommend that we do not rule out sending them to the south even though the climate against this is very strong right now. Cap and I have discussed this. He agrees with me that a U.S. force in the south for the purposes of training the Lebanese would meet Israel's realistic security requirements. The basis for what we do or don't do with the MNF must be what best serves Lebanese sovereignty and security without compromising Israeli security. A separate paper on this subject is attached at Tab C.

What George proposes on the U.S.-Israeli relationship must be looked at in a broader context which is not addressed in his memo, namely, how we are perceived as a world power. It is all very well to offer Begin and Arens a trip to Washington, but our original agreement was that he should not come until the Israeli troops were out of Lebanon. The problem is we are prepared to offer Israel a great many things, according to George's memo, merely on the signature of an agreement. Yet, he outlines no strategy which will facilitate a Syrian/PLO withdrawal, and until the Syrians leave, Israel won't leave. Hence, we stand the real risk that we will reward Israel for a piece of paper signed between itself and a

cowed Lebanon and then be stuck with a more permanent presence of Israeli, Syrian and PLO forces in Lebanon. I believe it is essential that you push very strongly to get some idea from George about how he intends to get moderate Arab support for his agreement and Syrian compliance. He talks vaguely about a visit to Damascus. He should definitely go to Damascus if we are to be serious about total troop withdrawals rather than a paper agreement.

On the issue of the peace process, what George says makes sense, but I believe he should be much more forceful with Mr. Begin on the fundamental problems we face with his settlements policy. He should also take a tough line with the Saudis and tell them in no uncertain terms they must use more muscle against both the Syrians and the PLO if they are to retain our respect at this critical time.

In sum, the urgent imperative in the Middle East is not just an Israeli-Lebanese agreement. It is withdrawal of foreign forces from Lebanon. The risk in George's proposal is that we may get a paper agreement which, because of its terms, complicates withdrawal and appears to reward Israel for six months of intransigence.

### III. PARTICIPANTS

To be provided.

### IV. PRESS PLAN

None.

### V. SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

See Agenda (Tab D).

### Attachments:

Tab A	Memorandum from George Shultz
Tab B	Talking Points for Your Summary of the NSPG and 3x5 card
Tab C	Israeli Withdrawal from Lebanon: A New Approach
Tab D	Agenda for NSPG

Prepared By:  
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